

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. LAHOOD). Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from Pennsylvania?

There was no objection.

APPOINTMENT OF CONFEREES ON
H.R. 4060, ENERGY AND WATER
DEVELOPMENT APPROPRIATIONS
ACT, 1999

Mr. MCDADE. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent to take from the Speaker's table the bill (H.R. 4060) making appropriations for energy and water development for the fiscal year ending September 30, 1999, and for other purposes, with a Senate amendment thereto, disagree to the Senate amendment, and agree to the conference asked by the Senate.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from Pennsylvania?

There was no objection.

MOTION TO INSTRUCT CONFEREES OFFERED BY
MR. VENTO

Mr. VENTO. Mr. Speaker, I offer a motion to instruct conferees.

The Clerk read as follows:

Mr. VENTO moves that in resolving the differences between the House and Senate, the managers on the part of the House at the conference on the disagreeing votes of the two Houses on the bill H.R. 4060, be instructed to disagree with the provision in Title IV of the Senate amendment, providing funding for the Denali Commission, and the provision in Title VI of the Senate amendment, the authorization for such Commission.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the rule, the gentleman from Minnesota (Mr. VENTO) will control 30 minutes and the gentleman from Pennsylvania (Mr. MCDADE) will control 30 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Minnesota (Mr. VENTO).

Mr. VENTO. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, this is an important motion that could save the American taxpayers \$20 million in this fiscal year which is included in the Senate bill, unauthorized, and could save tens of millions of dollars in each of fiscal years 2000, 2001, 2002 and 2003.

The Senate provisions of the Energy and Water Development Bill include a small title, title VI, that goes under the innocuous title of Denali Commission. However, if one reads the title, it becomes clear that this Denali Commission is designed to be more than a small help for the isolated communities of Alaska. This commission is destined to become the new Alaska Department of Economic Development funded by the Federal Government and the Federal taxpayers.

This commission is granted broad authority to develop a statewide comprehensive plan for economic and infrastructure development and, as I said, is given \$20 million to approve project and grant proposals in fiscal year 1999. The bill goes on to authorize such sums

as may be necessary for the following 4 years.

It does not take much imagination, given the prominent role of Alaska in the Senate appropriation process, as to what is going to happen with regards to this in future years. Federal funding will be as much as the traffic will bear, fundamentally. While we would be handing over millions of dollars for economic development in Alaska, we are providing a pittance of Federal oversight or accountability.

There are no guidelines or standards as to the grants that are provided. There is no qualification. There is no matching funds. The oversight, of course, by the GAO and the Inspector General will probably prove ample if something like this were ever put in place and point out in graphic detail all the mistakes and political deal that will have been made and the misappropriation and or waste of federal dollars.

This Denali Commission is stacked and is dominated by Alaskans with a board composed of a representative from the Chamber of Commerce, the executive director of the Alaska Municipal League, the president of the University of Alaska, a representative of the governor and a single Federal representative, who would be subject to Senate confirmation, in essence a Senate veto over the one national voice.

Mr. Speaker, it is my understanding that the original intent of the legislative proposal was to help those Alaskans who lived in the bush regions, the rural parts of the State. Mr. Speaker, this is far afield of what was considered.

The bill did not have any hearings in the House or Senate. It was inserted into the Senate appropriations bill. As a member of an authorizing committee, I would point out to my colleagues this is how bad law is developed. I would hope that we would instruct our conferees not to agree to this egregious provision, that we go back to the regular order, the regular process in terms of hearings in the sunlight of open hearing and debate on this issue; to pass the authorization, if there is a justification to pass it, through the House and the Senate and then provide for an appropriate commission and funding as justified and reasonable.

I might say, too, that Alaska as a State seems to be doing quite well these days and has not been short-changed with regards to resources of the Federal Government. In fact, it is pointed out that it is one of the leading States in terms of per capita investment by the Federal Government and has a surplus today of \$25 billion due to its oil revenues, so much so that it will be making \$1,400 rebates this year for each person without a sales tax in most parts of Alaska, without an income tax.

I think that the State of Alaska, while having serious problems that we need to work on, and I have worked on many of them over the years, this is not the way to go, this is not the route

to go to create an economic authority to pass out grants. I urge my colleagues to strongly support my motion to instruct conferees, not to accept these provisions.

Mr. Speaker, I include the following two documents for the RECORD:

TAXPAYERS FOR
COMMON SENSE,

Washington, DC, July 29, 1998.

Hon. BRUCE VENTO,
House of Representatives, Washington, DC.

DEAR REPRESENTATIVE VENTO: Taxpayers for Common Sense is pleased to support your motion to instruct House conferees to oppose authorization and funding for the Denali Commission (Title VI) in the FY99 Energy and Water Appropriations bill. We oppose Title VI for the following reasons:

Process: A big new commission doesn't belong in a spending bill. Even if such a commission were a nice idea (Taxpayers for Common Sense doesn't think it is), it is totally outrageous that the five pages of authorization language creating this commission are stuck into an appropriations bill.

Cost: No ceiling. The language authorizes "such sums as may be necessary" for the years 2000 through 2003. If this commission is enacted, no doubt there will be huge pressure to continue it after 2003. In short, Congress would be establishing an open-ended program with no authorization ceiling.

Substance: No controls and poorly drafted. Many other federal public works programs contain safeguards to make sure the money goes to good use. But Title VI requires no local cost sharing (as is required for Corps of Engineers water projects), no targeting of benefits to communities of need, and no criteria for judging priorities. There is nothing in Title VI to prevent money from simply being spread around to politically influential localities for low-priority projects and people who don't need the benefits.

Role: Should federal taxpayers pay for this? The commission would use federal taxpayers' money to accomplish what are clearly state projects addressing unique state concerns. Congress should be eliminating programs like this, not creating more of them.

Waste: Half-baked commission unlikely to achieve goals. With all of these failings, the commission is unlikely to achieve its goals and may very well end up wasting taxpayer money.

When the House considers the motion to go to conference on the FY99 Energy and Water Appropriations bill, Taxpayers for Common Sense urges all Representatives to vote for your motion to instruct on this issue. Please call me at (202) 546-8500 x102 if you have questions.

Sincerely,

RALPH DEGENNARO,
Executive Director

[From the Anchorage Daily News, July 12, 1998]

PERMANENT FUND; RECORD DIVIDEND ON OUR
RICHES

The Alaska Permanent Fund provided further proof of its status as the state's most powerful economic engine on Thursday with word that its value grew to about \$25 billion as of June 30, the end of the fiscal year.

That's a staggering number. But a much smaller number is the one that strikes home for most Alaskans—the estimated \$1,460 that each Alaskan will receive this fall for doing no more than living here.

That number is a guess, but Alaska Permanent Fund Corp. spokesman Jim Kelly does promise a record check, meaning something bigger than the \$1,296 sent to each Alaskan in 1997.

Call it \$1,400. That means an Alaska family of four will receive \$5,600 this fall. That's money to use for everything from appliances to cars to college savings to knocking down debt. No other state in the union gives its people such a direct, no-strings share of its revenue. What other state has the means?

No state income tax. In Anchorage, no sales tax. A yearly check that's grown to four figures. A \$25 billion fund that provides more revenue to the state than oil does. Financial-crisis? Not even with oil at \$12 a barrel. Other states would love this crisis.

Alaska has its share of problems and challenges, from Third World sanitary conditions in some villages and troubled fisheries to battles over subsistence rights and religious convictions. But we're not broke. We're rich.

That's a problem, too. We must decide what to do as a state with the Permanent Fund's income. We must decide what to do as families and individuals with our dividends.

May we be cursed with such difficulties for a long time to come.

Mr. Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. McDADE. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

(Mr. McDADE asked and was given permission to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. McDADE. Mr. Speaker, I want to point out to my colleagues, they do not need to be told that the hour is late. I think we are trying to get as much as we can done before we break. This bill is a pending bill which passed this body, Mr. Speaker, by a vote of 404-4. All we are saying to our colleagues is do not fetter us as we go to conference. Give us the opportunity to continue to represent the House that will merit a vote like this as we come back.

Mr. Speaker, I hope this will be roundly defeated.

Mr. Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. VENTO. Mr. Speaker, I yield such time as he may consume to the gentleman from California (Mr. MILLER), the ranking member of the Committee on Resources.

Mr. MILLER of California. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman for yielding time. I rise in support of his motion to instruct conferees to maintain the House position that he has offered.

The House has passed a clean energy and water bill without controversy over antienvironmental legislative riders which have bogged down Interior and other appropriations bills. The Vento motion to instruct would put the House on record in opposition to a \$20 million Alaska grant program which has been included as a rider in the Senate bill.

It is my understanding that the original intent of authorizing these funds was for the purpose of improving sanitation, drinking water and other basic needs of remote native villages in Alaska. Let me clearly state that I recognize the serious problems in rural Alaska and support responsible congressional efforts to address them.

But the Senate rider, as presently drafted, is not limited to using Federal funds to meet priority needs of native

Alaskans. Instead, the Senate would empower a five-person commission to develop a statewide, comprehensive plan for economic and infrastructure development. No native Alaskan nor rural Alaskan is directly appointed to the commission. Rather, the Chamber of Commerce, the Alaskan Municipal League, the university president, all of which are urban dominated, are given a vote in distributing \$20 million in federally funded grants with no strings attached.

Let us not allow ourselves to be fooled here. This is a blank check to use Federal funds to promote road building, resource extraction and other favorite causes of development proponents in Alaska. This is a recipe for federally funded antienvironmental mischief.

The Senate would spend \$20 million in Federal funds for Alaska development grants in 1999 and authorizes unlimited amounts for the next 4 years. So the next 4 years we would see a repeated habit of the Senate adding money for this purpose as the appropriations bills come from the Senate.

As the gentleman who has offered this motion points out, we have not been stingy with Alaska. In 1996, they insisted upon \$110 million in emergency economic disaster relief in southeast Alaska communities impacted by the closure of two pulp mills because of poor markets. Some of that money was used to hire lobbyists to come down here and ask for more money. I think what we have seen here, that is \$110 million, now there is \$20 million for this study. Then there is open-ended appropriations for the next 4 years. I do not think that the taxpayers of this country can afford to do business this way. I do not think that we can ask for another \$20 million. If this was important, then why did they not use some of the \$110 million we gave them 2 years ago to do economic and infrastructure studies?

I would also point out very clearly, as the gentleman who offered this motion has pointed out, and, that is, Alaska has a permanent fund of \$23 billion. That \$23 billion fund is supposed to be there in perpetuity for the future of Alaska and its residents. I have no problem with that. But maybe Alaska and its residents concerned about their economic development in the future could find it in their heart to spend \$20 million of their \$23 billion for the purposes of ensuring the kind of infrastructure and development that they think they need to go into the future.

This is a permanent fund that is currently spinning off \$1,300 for every man, woman and child who is a resident of the State of Alaska. That is fine. That is what they decided to do with the fund. But because they decided to have the fund make those expenditures does not mean that the Federal Government and all of the rest of the taxpayers of this country need to come in and fill behind those decisions with \$20 million in a study that is very

loosely constructed and without limitations as to the future appropriations for it. I think it is fair to ask the State legislature to step up to the plate and contribute to addressing the problems of rural Alaska, but the Senate rider does not even require matching funds from the State of Alaska.

In the State of California, we have huge infrastructure problems, we have huge problems trying to meet our water needs, our transportation needs, our airport needs, all the things that so many of us in other States experience. But we are not getting \$20 million from the Federal Government to study that and we are not getting 4 years of unlimited appropriations to study that in the future.

Clearly, there ought to be some effort to try to focus this study on the problems of rural Alaska. There ought to be some effort to have the State match the money for this study.

There are many, many studies and many, many projects in this bill that are worthwhile. But local communities are matching those, States are matching those, private organizations are matching that. This one is simply a free gift of \$20 million to the State of Alaska. I would urge Members to support the Vento motion.

Mr. McDADE. Mr. Speaker, I yield such time as he may consume to the gentleman from Alaska (Mr. YOUNG), the chairman of the Committee on Resources.

(Mr. YOUNG of Alaska asked and was given permission to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. YOUNG of Alaska. Mr. Speaker, I rise in opposition to the motion to instruct conferees.

Mr. VENTO. Mr. Speaker, I yield 3 minutes to the gentleman from New York (Mr. HINCHEY).

Mr. HINCHEY. Mr. Speaker, I believe that if a comprehensive infrastructure bill was brought to the full floor of this Congress, there would be many people who would support it. I think it is quite clear that the infrastructure needs of the country are quite severe and that we ought to have a comprehensive approach to these infrastructure needs. But this is a particular appropriation for one particular State, \$20 million in one fiscal year and an open-ended circumstance for the next several years, probably as much as \$100 million over a 5-year period for the State of Alaska.

As has been pointed out, this Congress has not been ungenerous to the State of Alaska. Alaska is second only to the State of Mississippi in terms of Federal per capita aid.

In addition to that, the State has its own \$42 billion fund from oil royalties. That fund will be distributed to every man, woman and child in the State this year as it was last year. Last year, every person in the State received about \$1,300. That is \$5,200 for a family of four.

It is also true that Alaska has not been aggressive in taxing itself. This is

a State without a State income tax, and much of the State does not have a State sales tax. So it is hard to imagine why the Congress would be appropriating this particular money for this one State for this one particular situation, particularly when the expenditure is so open-ended.

In other words, this money could be spent for virtually anything. It could be spent to build roads anywhere. It could be spent to engage in a whole host of activities which would be contrary to sound environmental not less economic policy.

With all that in mind, Mr. Speaker, I think that it is prudent for us to join with those who have called this a taxpayer boondoggle and support the Vento motion.

Mr. VENTO. Mr. Speaker, I have no further requests for time, and I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. MCDADE. Mr. Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time, and I move the previous question on the motion to instruct.

The previous question was ordered.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion to instruct offered by the gentleman from Minnesota (Mr. VENTO).

The motion to instruct was agreed to.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

CALL OF THE HOUSE

Mr. MCDADE. Mr. Speaker, may I explain to my colleagues that for the first time in 36 years, I am about to move a call of the House, and I only do so because the leadership on both sides is trying to get a rule up, so, therefore, Mr. Speaker, I move reluctantly a call of the House.

A call of the House was ordered.

The call was taken by electronic device, and the following Members responded to their names:

[Roll No. 354]

ANSWERED "PRESENT"—403

Abercrombie	Bonior	Clayton
Ackerman	Bono	Clement
Aderholt	Borski	Clyburn
Allen	Boswell	Coble
Andrews	Boucher	Coburn
Armey	Boyd	Collins
Bachus	Brady (PA)	Combest
Baesler	Brady (TX)	Condit
Baker	Brown (CA)	Conyers
Baldacci	Brown (FL)	Cook
Ballenger	Brown (OH)	Cooksey
Barcia	Bryant	Costello
Barr	Bunning	Cox
Barrett (NE)	Burr	Coyne
Barrett (WI)	Burton	Cramer
Bartlett	Buyer	Crane
Barton	Calvert	Crapo
Bass	Camp	Cubin
Becerra	Campbell	Cummings
Bentsen	Canady	Cunningham
Bereuter	Cannon	Danner
Berry	Capps	Davis (FL)
Bilirakis	Cardin	Davis (IL)
Blagojevich	Carson	Davis (VA)
Bliley	Castle	Deal
Blumenauer	Chabot	DeFazio
Blunt	Chambliss	DeGette
Boehlert	Chenoweth	Delahunt
Boehner	Christensen	DeLauro
Bonilla	Clay	Deutsch

Diaz-Balart	Kelly	Peterson (PA)
Dickey	Kennedy (MA)	Petri
Dicks	Kennedy (RI)	Pickering
Dingell	Kennelly	Pickett
Dixon	Kildee	Pitts
Doggett	Kilpatrick	Pombo
Dooley	Kim	Pomeroy
Doolittle	Kind (WI)	Porter
Doyle	King (NY)	Portman
Dreier	Kingston	Poshard
Duncan	Klecza	Price (NC)
Dunn	Klink	Quinn
Ehlers	Klug	Radanovich
Ehrlich	Knollenberg	Rahall
Emerson	Kolbe	Ramstad
Engel	Kucinich	Rangel
English	LaFalce	Redmond
Ensign	LaHood	Regula
Eshoo	Lampson	Reyes
Etheridge	Largent	Riggs
Evans	Latham	Rivers
Everett	LaTourette	Rodriguez
Ewing	Lazio	Roemer
Farr	Leach	Rogers
Fattah	Lee	Rohrabacher
Fazio	Levin	Ros-Lehtinen
Filner	Lewis (CA)	Rothman
Foley	Lewis (GA)	Roukema
Forbes	Lewis (KY)	Roybal-Allard
Ford	Lipinski	Royce
Fossella	Livingston	Rush
Fowler	LoBiondo	Ryun
Fox	Lofgren	Sabo
Franks (NJ)	Lowe	Salmon
Frelinghuysen	Lucas	Sanchez
Frost	Luther	Sanders
Furse	Maloney (CT)	Sandlin
Gallegly	Maloney (NY)	Sanford
Ganske	Manton	Sawyer
Gejdenson	Manzullo	Saxton
Gephardt	Markey	Schaefer, Dan
Gibbons	Martinez	Schaffer, Bob
Gilchrest	Mascara	Schumer
Gillmor	Matsui	Scott
Gilman	McCarthy (MO)	Sensenbrenner
Goode	McCarthy (NY)	Serrano
Goodlatte	McCollum	Sessions
Goodling	McCrery	Shadegg
Goss	McDade	Shaw
Graham	McDermott	Shays
Granger	McGovern	Sherman
Green	McHale	Shimkus
Greenwood	McHugh	Shuster
Gutierrez	McInnis	Sisisky
Gutknecht	McIntosh	Skaggs
Hall (OH)	McIntyre	Skeen
Hall (TX)	McKeon	Skelton
Hamilton	McKinney	Slaughter
Hansen	McNulty	Smith (MI)
Hastert	Meehan	Smith (NJ)
Hastings (FL)	Meek (FL)	Smith (OR)
Hastings (WA)	Meeks (NY)	Smith (TX)
Hayworth	Menendez	Smith, Adam
Hefley	Metcalfe	Smith, Linda
Hefner	Mica	Snowbarger
Herger	Millender-McDonald	Snyder
Hill	Miller (CA)	Solomon
Hilleary	Miller (FL)	Souder
Hilliard	Minge	Spence
Hinchoy	Mink	Spratt
Hinojosa	Mollohan	Stabenow
Hobson	Moran (KS)	Stearns
Hoekstra	Moran (VA)	Stenholm
Holden	Morella	Stokes
Hooley	Murtha	Strickland
Horn	Myrick	Stump
Hostettler	Nadler	Stupak
Houghton	Nethercutt	Sununu
Hoyer	Neumann	Talent
Hulshof	Ney	Tauscher
Hunter	Northup	Tauzin
Hutchinson	Oberstar	Taylor (MS)
Hyde	Obey	Taylor (NC)
Inglis	Olver	Thomas
Istook	Ortiz	Thompson
Jackson (IL)	Oxley	Thornberry
Jackson-Lee	Packard	Thune
(TX)	Pallone	Thurman
Jefferson	Pappas	Tiahrt
Jenkins	Parker	Tierney
John	Pascarella	Torres
Johnson (CT)	Pastor	Towns
Johnson (WI)	Paul	Trafigant
Johnson, E. B.	Paxon	Turner
Johnson, Sam	Payne	Upton
Jones	Pease	Velazquez
Kanjorski	Pelosi	Vento
Kaptur	Peterson (MN)	Visclosky
Kasich		Walsh

Wamp	Weller	Wilson
Waters	Wexler	Wise
Watkins	Weygand	Wolf
Watt (NC)	White	Woolsey
Watts (OK)	Whitfield	Wynn
Weldon (PA)	Wicker	Young (AK)

□ 2225

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. LAHOOD). On this rollcall, 403 Members have recorded their presence by electronic device, a quorum.

Under the rule, further proceedings under the call are dispensed with.

APPOINTMENT OF CONFEREES ON H.R. 4060, ENERGY AND WATER DEVELOPMENT APPROPRIATIONS ACT, 1999

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Without objection, the Chair appoints the following conferees on H.R. 4060: Messrs. MCDADE, ROGERS, KNOLLENBERG, FRELINGHUYSEN, PARKER, CALLAHAN, DICKEY, LIVINGSTON, FAZIO of California, VISCLOSKY, EDWARDS, PASTOR and OBEY.

There was no objection.

LEGISLATIVE PROGRAM

(Mr. ARMEY asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. ARMEY. Mr. Speaker, I ask for this time for the purpose of reporting on the schedule.

Mr. Speaker, let me begin by saying I appreciate all the Members for their patience. Working this time of the year in appropriations season is always difficult, we know. We are about to begin consideration of a rule for the transportation appropriations bill.

We have a little bit of difficulty with that bill, but the principals who are involved in it are, in fact, actively, and I think effectively, working towards a solution of that. So I would suggest that we could move forward with the rule and then by the time we have the vote on the rule I am sure we will be ready to begin our work and complete our work on transportation.

Mr. BONIOR. Mr. Speaker, will the gentleman yield?

Mr. ARMEY. I am happy to yield to the gentleman from Michigan.

Mr. BONIOR. Mr. Speaker, I thank my colleague for yielding.

Mr. Speaker, if I might say to the majority leader, most folks have been working on both sides of the aisle. We are going on probably the 14th hour of a workday today. In addition to that, we have had an extraordinary week, an emotional and stressful week, as we all know. Folks have been working long hours and long shifts, including the Capitol Police, as the gentleman is fully aware and appreciates.

I do not know what we gain by going into at 10:30 in the evening a contentious rule that has not been worked out yet, and even if it is worked out I am not sure that we are in a position to even proceed on the appropriation bill itself.